

INFORMATION REPORT

231904

COUNTRY Italy

CONFIDENTIAL

DATE DISTR. 18 August 1948

SUBJECT Soviet Disapproval of Communist Action
Following the Attempted Assassination
of Togliatti

NO. OF PAGES 3 25X1A

PLACE
ACQUIRED

NO. OF ENCLS.
(LISTED BELOW)

DATE OF INFO 14-23 July 1948

This document is hereby regraded to
CONFIDENTIAL in accordance with the
letter of 18 October 1978 from the
Director of Central Intelligence to the
Archivist of the United States.
Next Review Date: 2008

SUPPLEMENT TO
REPORT NO. 25X1X

CIA Library

115.1 19M1. The attempted assassination of Togliatti and the consequent action of the Communist Party are reported to have led to a very serious crisis within the Directorate of the Party. Soon after the shooting of Togliatti, Pietro Secchia took over the leadership of the Party and planned the general strike.

023 19M2. Giuseppe Di Vittorio, who arrived by air from the United States on Wednesday evening (14 July 1948), was confronted with a fait accompli. He declared himself absolutely opposed to the strike, pointing out that the labor organization was not prepared for it, that there were not enough funds to finance a prolonged strike, and that in all probability the strike would cause the secession of the labor organization.

3. Ruggero Grieco, too, is said to have been opposed to the strike and objected strongly to Secchia's decision. Grieco was of the opinion that the action squads were not ready, that a general strike for an indefinite period would either fail or end in revolution, and that in any case a general strike should be proclaimed only after thorough preparation. Grieco was supported in this by Luigi Longo. This disagreement resulted in a quarrel between Secchia and Grieco, after which Secchia left the meeting and disappeared.

4. However, when Grieco contacted officials at the Russian Embassy, he learned that Secchia had sought refuge there. About half past eleven on Wednesday night the Russian Embassy indicated by phone that the strike should be called off by Thursday morning. Late on the same night Grieco called at the Russian Embassy, and returned to Communist headquarters looking very despondent. He informed his colleagues that Moscow had disapproved the action of the Party and explained that Moscow had previously issued orders that on no account should acts of violence be provoked in Italy. In view of the present delicate international situation, worsened by the Berlin and Yugoslav crises Moscow did not wish the Italian and French Communist Parties to compromise themselves too much, since the Kremlin at the present moment did not want a civil conflict either in Italy or France because of the impossibility of Russia's intervening to support the Communists.

CONFIDENTIAL

CLASSIFICATION ~~SECRET~~/CONTROL U. S. OFFICIALS ONLY

STATE	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	NAVY	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	NSRB		DISTRIBUTION	
ARMY	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	AIR		FBI	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		

WARNING NOTICE: THIS DISTRIBUTION LISTING MUST BE

EXCISED BEFORE PUBLIC RELEASE OF THIS DOCUMENT.

Document No. 003
NO CHANGE in Class. ☐
☒ DECLASSIFIED
Class. CHANGED TO: TS S C
DDA Memo, 4 Apr 77
Auth: DDA REG. 77/1763

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~~~SECRET~~
~~SECRET~~/CONTROL - U. S. OFFICIALS ONLY

25X1A

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

- 2 -

5. Grieco added that Secchia was fully cognizant of these orders and consequently his proclamation of the general strike was in open opposition to the directives issued from Moscow and approved by Togliatti.
6. The Communist executives appear to have been impressed by the fact that Secchia sought refuge at the Russian Embassy although he knew that Moscow disapproved of his calling the strike, and puzzled that he should have sought refuge at all. When confronted with these questions, Grieco refused to answer, but then lost his temper, and shouted, "Don't let me speak, it is better for you all."
7. Grieco and Longo had a long conversation behind closed doors the night of the attempted assassination. Throughout Thursday, Secchia was not seen anywhere.
8. Di Vittorio was in close touch with Grieco during the strike. The subsequent orders given by the C.G.I.L. were issued according to agreements reached between the Directorate of the Communist Party and the C.G.I.L. itself.
9. It is believed that Di Vittorio brought pressure to bear upon the P.S.L.I. (Partito Socialista Lavoratori Italiani) with a view to persuading this Party to act as mediator in avoiding a syndical scission. This move was reportedly suggested by Grieco on orders from the Russian Embassy.
10. Giovanni Borghese of the P. S. I. (Partito Socialista Italiano) was requested to keep in continuous touch with the headquarters of the Communist Party, in order to coordinate, hour by hour, the action of the Communist and Socialist parties.
11. Riccardo Lombardi, Alberto Jacometti and Borghese had a meeting with Alessandro Pertini and Giuseppe Romita, during which it was agreed that because of recent political developments, it would be advisable to say nothing whatever, for the time being at least, in regard to the autonomy of the Socialist Party. The executives of the Communist Party were informed of this decision. In its turn the Communist Party advised the P.S.I. of its intention to conduct a strong propaganda campaign against both the Christian Democratic Party and the reformist Socialists.
12. Many messages from regional and provincial sections reached the headquarters of the Communist Party on Thursday (15 July) morning, protesting the orders for the cessation of the strike. The Communist executives informed the secretaries of these sections that the prolongation of the strike might have led to civil war and the overthrow of the present Government and since the Socialists and Communists did not desire to take the responsibility of the government at the present moment (which would mean the rejection of the Marshall Plan) it was considered advisable to call off the strike. It was pointed out in addition that the rejection of the Marshall Plan would not be feasible because it was not possible at the moment to organize shipments from the east to take the place of American assistance.
13. The chiefs of the Communist sections throughout the country have nevertheless been instructed to keep alive the opposition in their respective sections,

~~SECRET~~/CONTROL - U. S. OFFICIALS ONLY

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~~~SECRET~~~~SECRET~~/CONTROL - U. S. OFFICIALS ONLY

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

25X1A


- 3 -

requesting that the masses be told that the moment for action has not yet arrived, but will inevitably come. Grieco has now been given the task of re-organizing the ranks of the Communist Party throughout the country.

14. When he called at the Russian Embassy, Di Vittorio was given a very cold reception by the Embassy officials. He was not received by the Ambassador or by any of the secretaries. He was only allowed to interview one of the low-ranking officials, who told him that the Russian authorities were most dissatisfied with the manner in which the strike had been carried out. Moreover, Di Vittorio was accused of having disclosed by his poor conduct of the strike the true policy of the Communist-led C.G.I.L. and of having succeeded only in exasperating the mass of Italians.
15. Di Vittorio was reminded that it was a puerile mistake to proclaim the general strike on such a blatantly evident political issue, thus giving the Government an excellent opportunity to strengthen its position.
16. It is reported that Di Vittorio told Leonilde Iotti afterwards that during his interview with the Soviet official he was not even given a chance to make a reply or say that he acted practically on Secchia's orders. He added that he greatly resented the fact that Secchia had put him in such an awkward position with the Russian Embassy.

~~SECRET~~/CONTROL - U. S. OFFICIALS ONLY~~CONFIDENTIAL~~~~SECRET~~